

Washington and Baltimore Jazz Greats: James Reese Europe, Duke Ellington and Billie Holiday

MUSEUM CONNECTION: Art and Enlightenment

Purpose: In this lesson students will learn about three important jazz artists from Washington and Baltimore – James Reese Europe, Duke Ellington, and Billie Holiday. They will read about their lives, listen to their music, and learn to play the theme song of James Reese Europe’s 369th US Infantry “Hell Fighters” Band - “The Memphis Blues.”

Grade Level and Content Area: High School General Music or Jazz History Classes

Time Frame: Eight or more one-hour classes.

High School General Music ELOs:

- I.A.5 The student will listen to, perform, and describe musical examples representing diverse genres and cultures.
- I.B.1 The student will demonstrate and evaluate skills needed to perform in ensemble (i.e. blend, balance, intonation, and rhythmic unity).
- I.B.2 The student will perform simple original arrangements and compositions using a variety of classroom instruments and the voice.
- II.A.4 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the diversity of musical expression and the creative processes from which these endeavors emerge.
- II.B.1 The student will demonstrate knowledge of the historical, musical, and cultural background of a representative sample of musical works.
- II.B.4 The student will identify sources of American music genres, trace the evolution of those genres, and cite well-known musicians associated with them.
- II.D.3 The student will analyze factors that influence relationships between a composer’s work and his or her environment.

Objectives:

- Students will learn about the lives of James Reese Europe, Duke Ellington, and Billie Holiday.
- Students will learn to follow a One Line Score of a musical recording and a guided outline of a musical recording.
- Students will learn to follow a guided outline of a musical recording.
- Students will learn to play “The Memphis Blues” by W.C. Handy, the theme song of James Reese Europe’s 369th US Infantry “Hell Fighters” Band.
- Students will create a class presentation of what they have learned through this unit, and will perform “The Memphis Blues” as a class band.

Vocabulary and Concepts:

Ragtime	popular dance music style of the early 20 th Century, employing syncopated or “ragged” rhythms.
Dixieland	style of early 20 th Century jazz from New Orleans, featuring syncopated rhythms and simultaneous improvisation.
Syncopation	playing notes ahead of the beat, so they do not fall on the natural expected stress.
Improvisation	the practice of composing music spontaneously while performing.
Chord	two or more notes played simultaneously.
Tone color	quality of sound, or timbre, created by playing musical instruments a certain way or by voicing instrumental or vocal sounds together.
Arranging	preparing and adapting an already written composition for different instrumental or vocal combinations.
Stop-time	a device in an arrangement in which all accompanying instruments stop playing for a number of measures, allowing the soloist a moment for free improvisation.

Materials:

For the Teacher:

Set of wooden Jenga^(© Parker Bros./Hasbro) Blocks (available at any toy store).

DVD player, or computer with projector and speakers.

CD Player, or computer with speakers.

Printer, for printing out Teacher and Student Resource Sheets.

CD recordings (or recordings downloaded from iTunes)

- James Reese Europe’s 369th US Infantry “Hell Fighters” Band – The Complete Recordings, Inside Recordings © 1996 (available from iTunes at <http://itunes.apple.com/us/album/james-reese-europes-369th/id79312254>)
- Ken Burns Jazz: Duke Ellington, Sony © 2000 (available from iTunes at <http://itunes.apple.com/us/album/ken-burns-jazz-duke-ellington/id186311970>)

- The Complete Billie Holiday, X5 Music Group © 2009 (available from iTunes at <http://itunes.apple.com/us/album/the-complete-billie-holiday/id316776802>)
- As an alternative to these three recordings, you can use the CD Box Set that accompanies the Ken Burns Jazz Series, entitled Ken Burns Jazz: The Story of America's Music, Sony © 2000 (available from iTunes at <http://itunes.apple.com/us/album/ken-burns-jazz-the-story-americas/id193045177>)

DVDs

- Ken Burns Jazz Series, episode 2, “The Gift,” episode 4, “The True Welcome,” episode 5, “Swing: Pure Pleasure”

Teacher Resource Sheet 1: Suggested names for **Jenga Jazz**

Teacher Resource Sheet 2: “The Memphis Blues” by W.C. Handy, piano version reprinted from Lester S. Levy Sheet Music Collection of the Johns Hopkins University

For the Students:

Melody instruments (recorders, Orff instruments, flutes, clarinets, trumpets, saxophones, keyboards, violins, etc.)

Chord instruments (guitars, auto harps, etc.)

Bass instruments (string bass, electric bass, tuba, etc.)

Student Resource Sheet 1: “The Memphis Blues” One Line Score

Student Resource Sheet 2: “The Memphis Blues” Performance Parts

- a) C Melody Instruments
- b) B flat Melody Instruments
- c) E flat Melody Instruments
- d) Guitar Melody Tab
- e) Chord Instruments
- f) Bass Instruments

Student Resource Sheet 3: “East St. Louis Toodle-oo” Listening Guide

Student Resource Sheet 4: Biography of James Reese Europe

Student Resource Sheet 5: Biography of Duke Ellington

Student Resource Sheet 6: Biography of Billie Holiday

Resources:

Publications

- Harris, Stephen, *Harlem's Hell Fighters*. Dulles, VA (2006), Potomac Books, Inc.
- Peretti, Burton, *Lift Every Voice – The History of African American Music*. Lanham, MD (2009), Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- R2C2H2, *James Reese Europe – Jazz Lieutenant*. Lexington, KY (2005), BookSurge, LLC
- Terkel, Studs, *Giants of Jazz*, New York, NY (1957), 3rd edition 2002, The New Press

Web Sites

- <http://www.worldwar1.com/dbc/hhf.htm>, James Reese Europe and the Harlem Hell Fighters Band
- <http://jass.com/Others/europe.html>, James Reese Europe
- <http://www.arlingtoncemetery.net/jreurope.htm>, James Reese Europe, gravesite
- <http://www.redhotjazz.com/europe.html>, Lieutenant James Reese Europe, Songs Brought Back from the Battlefield
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Reese_Europe, James Reese Europe
- <http://www.jazzistry.org/timeline.html>, Jazz History Timeline
- <http://levysheetmusic.mse.jhu.edu>, Lester S. Levy Collection of Sheet Music, part of Special Collections at the Sheridan Libraries of the Johns Hopkins University of Baltimore.
- <http://www.redhotjazz.com/duke.html>, Edward “Duke” Ellington
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Duke_Ellington, Duke Ellington
- <http://www.ellingtonschool.org/home/index.html>, Ellington School of the Arts, Washington, DC
- <http://hollywoodusa.co.uk/GravesOutofLA/ellington.htm>, Final Resting Place of Duke Ellington

- <http://www.redhotjazz.com/bubber.html>, James “Bubber” Miley
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Billie_Holiday, Billie Holiday
- <http://www.hollywoodusa.co.uk/GravesOutofLA/billieholiday.htm>, Final Resting Place of Billie Holiday
- <http://www.thegrio.com/top-stories/billie-holiday-statue-rededicated.php>, Billie Holiday statue rededicated 50 years after her death

Historical Background:

Introduction

Jazz music is one of America’s greatest cultural gifts to the World. The story of jazz is a story of the coming together of different people from different cultures, and the musical explosion that occurred because of their music colliding. It could only have happened in America.

When we consider the history of jazz, we think of the cities where it grew and developed, in the streets, the clubs, the speakeasies, and the concert halls. We think of New Orleans, New York, Kansas City, Chicago, and Los Angeles. We don’t normally consider Washington or Baltimore to be important cities in the story of jazz, even though several influential musicians came from the area, and both cities once had vibrant jazz scenes. It is the purpose of this lesson to highlight three of the most important jazz artists of the Twentieth Century who all grew up in Washington and Baltimore before moving to New York where they made their mark on the jazz World. All three artists’ importance to jazz history is unquestionable, and it is difficult to imagine the art form without any one of them. James Reese Europe, the emancipator of jazz and its first international celebrity, grew up in Washington, D.C.; Edward Kennedy ‘Duke’ Ellington, who was the band-leader of the finest jazz band there ever was, also grew up in Washington; Billie Holiday, one of the greatest jazz singers of all and the voice that altered how all popular music is sung, grew up on the streets of Fells Point, in Baltimore.



The Jazz Greats from Washington and Baltimore (James Reese Europe, Duke Ellington, Billie Holiday)
Images from <http://www.blackpast.org>

<http://www.blackpast.org/?q=aah/europe-james-reese-1881-1919>

<http://www.blackpast.org/?q=aah/ellington-edward-duke-1899-1974>

<http://www.blackpast.org/?q=aah/holliday-billie-1915-1959>

James Reese Europe (1881-1919)

James Reese Europe was born in 1881 in Alabama, but his parents moved to Washington, DC, when he was still a child. The family moved into a house on the same street as the great American bandleader John Philip Sousa, the man who wrote “The Stars and Stripes Forever.” Young James received many music lessons from the members of Sousa’s band and grew to love the sounds of the military band. When he was in his 20s, James Europe moved to New York, where he conducted musical shows in the theatres there. In booking musicians to play in these shows, Europe became aware of the different treatment of Black musicians from White musicians in the city – the New York branch of the American Federation of Musicians forbade blacks to be members. Blacks found it harder to get bookings, and they had no union protection to enable them to receive insurance or unemployment payment. In order to redress the imbalance, James Europe began “The Clef Club,” the first musicians’ union for black musicians. By joining The Clef Club, Black musicians could look forward to more regular employment and much-needed protection for their livelihood.

James Europe loved the city, and he loved the musicians he met there. He learned about a new style of music that was becoming fashionable amongst Black musicians – ragtime. In ragtime, musicians would play notes in a ragged way, not ‘straight’ according to what was printed on the page, but looser and with more improvisation. Ragtime was an early form of jazz and was well accepted by Whites who preferred it to the dark, earthy sounds

of the blues. African American musicians found respect amongst Whites by playing ragtime, and James Reese Europe knew that ragtime was a way that he could get audiences of all colors to appreciate Black music. Europe organized and conducted the first ever concerts of Black music in Carnegie Hall, and he was the first to make a record featuring an orchestra made up completely of Black musicians. Because of what he did to represent African American musicians, ragtime pianist Eubie Blake later said "He was our benefactor and inspiration. Even more, he was the Martin Luther King of music."

James Europe became the musical director for Vernon and Irene Castle, a dance duo who were known throughout Europe and the USA for their incredible dancing skills. They showcased ballroom dancing styles, and Europe wrote many showpieces for them. One of the Castle Duo's best-known dances was a foxtrot choreographed to W.C. Handy's tune "The Memphis Blues." James Reese Europe arranged the tune for the Castle Duo's band, and it became a big ragtime hit. Europe also added an unusual instrument to their band – the saxophone (which would soon become the quintessential sound of all great jazz bands).

When the First World War broke out in 1914, Europe enlisted as a lieutenant in the army. His regiment, the 15th New York Infantry, was the first regiment of Black soldiers granted a commission by the Governor of New York. When they traveled to France to join the war effort in 1918, they became the 369th US Infantry Regiment. James Reese Europe was the natural choice for bandleader. Europe's band played military music unlike any other regimental band, because Europe added ragtime to the music. The band took old marches and added ragged rhythms and swing. Their music was infectious and fun. Their theme song was the same tune that Europe had arranged for the Castles – "The Memphis Blues." The French people adored this new sound they heard from the band of the 369th US Infantry Regiment. James Europe's band members were the first Americans to bring the new jazz style to the countries of the European continent.

In combat, members of the 369th US Infantry were unparalleled. On April 20, 1918, James Europe accompanied a French patrol deep into no-man's-land, under heavy fire, and thus became the first African American to face combat in the war. The regiment survived 191 days of heavy combat, they were chosen by the French Military High Command to lead the Allied forces to the Rhine, and 171 members of the 369th were decorated for bravery, the most of any American regiment. The French nicknamed them the "Hell Fighters."

When the 369th US Infantry "Hell Fighters" Regiment returned from war, they were given a heroes' welcome by the City of New York. James Europe led the band as they paraded through the streets of the city. The "Hell Fighters" band went on a successful tour of US cities and made 24 recordings, bringing their ragtime sound back to America. It would all end too soon, however, on August 1919. An argument between Europe and one of the band's drummers turned deadly, and Europe was knifed in the neck. He died less than 24 hours later, at the age of 39. His tragic death cut short a highly successful career. It is thought that he would have probably gone on to popularize Black music in ways we can only dream of, and his death at such a young age is incalculable.

James Reese Europe is buried in Arlington Cemetery, near his hometown of Washington, DC. A simple grave marks the last resting place of the man who helped to bring equal rights for Black musicians and who took American jazz music to the World. He was a true American hero.

Edward Kennedy “Duke” Ellington (1899-1974)

Edward Kennedy Ellington grew up in Washington, DC. His parents valued hard work, and understood the importance of the Arts in his upbringing. They taught him to act with dignity at all times, to be proud of his accomplishments yet not arrogant, and to honor all those he should come in contact with.

Ellington played the piano from an early age, but resisted the conformity of learning to play notes exactly as they were printed on the page. He liked to copy the styles of great Black ragtime pianists such as James P. Johnson, ‘Jelly Roll’ Morton, and Scott Joplin. He loved to compose at the piano, using chords to create new colors and sounds. Ellington’s abilities to entertain at the piano earned him many friends growing up, and they nicknamed him “The Duke” because of his fashionable clothes.

Duke Ellington had a band called “The Washingtonians” which played ragtime tunes and many of Ellington’s own compositions. They went to New York to try to become successful in the music business, but their success was limited at first. They returned to Washington, but they never gave up trying to get better. The Washingtonians played at clubs throughout Washington and Virginia, and Duke Ellington also began to publish his own songs as sheet music. The band got a lucky break when piano-player Fats Waller asked for members of the band to become part of his own band in New York, and so some of The Washingtonians returned to the big city. Eventually Fats Waller asked for Duke to come to New York and take over the band himself. The band became “The Duke Ellington Orchestra” and took up residence at some of the finest New York clubs. Their most important engagement was at The Cotton Club in Harlem, through the 1930s and early 1940s. The Cotton Club was owned by a man who ran the club on very strict racial lines - the band members were Black, the dancers were light-skinned Blacks, and yet the customers who came to the club were all White. Ellington was well aware of the racial injustices at The Cotton Club, but he refused to let these issues destroy his dream of creating great music. Ellington was too fine of a man – he would conquer racism by rising above it, not descending to its level.

Duke Ellington liked to think of his music as “American Music” rather than jazz. Even though his band consisted of some of the finest songwriters and jazz musicians the World has ever seen, the music was always elegant and sophisticated. His style of music was a far cry from the ragtime and Dixieland sounds where jazz had begun. His skill at arranging for the different tone colors of the band was unparalleled – he coaxed the greatest variety of sounds from his band members, and The Duke Ellington Orchestra became one of the greatest jazz bands the World has ever heard.

Through his residency at the Cotton Club and the proceeds from the sale of sheet music, Duke Ellington became very wealthy. He was able to pay for his parents to retire. He was even able to buy a train for the band, so they wouldn't have to sit in segregated seats when they went on tour. Though his style of music went out of fashion as the swing era music of younger band leaders such as Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, and the Dorsey brothers took over in popularity, Duke remained a living legend and an ambassador for true "American" music up until his death in 1974.

Ellington is buried in New York, but his legacy remains in Washington, as the city's "School of the Arts" bears his name. Today, the Duke Ellington School of the Arts in Washington, DC, educates tomorrow's artists by honoring Duke's ideals of hard work, self-pride, elegance, and dedication to one's craft.

Billie Holiday (1915-1959)

Billie Holiday was born into poverty in Baltimore City. Her real name was Eleanora Fagan, though some sources give her name as Elinora Harris. Her childhood was very difficult. She idolized Billie Dove, an actress, and took her first name. Her last name came from Clarence Holiday, a man who once had a romantic affair with Billie's mother, and who was probably Billie's father (though the birth certificate lists a different man). Clarence was a jazz guitarist in Fletcher Henderson's band and even though he was notably absent in Billie's upbringing, he did take her to see jazz shows and probably inspired her to take music as her career.

Billie Holiday had to work hard to earn money for the family from an early age. She scrubbed the stoops and doorsteps of people's houses near to her childhood home, in Fells Point, Baltimore. By buying her own supplies, she was able to charge more than other workers, and she also offered to help clean inside people's home for more money. By promoting herself door-to-door, she was able to earn the \$4 rent each week for her family to stay living in their tiny house on Durham Street. Billie's mother was rarely home, and the young girl also had to take care of her elderly great-grandmother. One of the most traumatic moments of Billie's early life came when she fell asleep in her great-grandmother's arms and woke to find that the old woman had died. As a result, Billie was stuck in her grasp for two hours until the neighbors came and rescued her.

Billie first started to hear records in some of the more upscale places where she would clean. She sang along to the songs of Bessie Smith, a wonderful African American blues singer, and Louis Armstrong, the great trumpeter. This led to her realizing that singing was a way to pour out all the pain of her harsh upbringing. Singing was the only time she felt happy.

When Billie was 12, she and her mother moved to New York. Billie got a lucky break when she auditioned for a dancing job at "The Log Cabin," a nightclub in downtown Manhattan. Jerry Preston, the owner, told her he had no jobs for dancers but asked her if she could sing. When she opened her mouth and began to sing, Mr. Preston was astounded at the easiness of her voice and the way her singing invoked such sadness. He

immediately engaged her to sing at the club. Gradually Billie's fame spread through New York. She became known as a singer who really felt every word she sang. When she sang of love and loss, everybody could hear the pain in her voice. Although Billie had affairs with many men, unfortunately she never found true love in her life. Her singing reflected the longing, loneliness, and pain better than any other singer the World has ever known.

As Billie become famous, some of the greatest jazz bands in the country engaged her to sing with them. She recorded many songs and as a result, today we are lucky to have many of her recordings that we can listen to. She was a favorite singer of many jazz greats including Benny Goodman and Lester Young, who gave her the nickname "Lady Day."

Billie's childhood pains never went away, though. She sought release in narcotics and even went to jail for drug possession. At the young age of 44, she died from her addiction to heroin. Billie Holiday is buried in New York, but she is honored in Baltimore City by a statue on Pennsylvania Avenue. The statue is near the site of the demolished Royal Theater, once the vibrant home of jazz in Baltimore, and the place where Billie sang many times whenever she would come home.

Lesson Development:

Motivation:

Jazz Jenga

Using a marker and a set of Jenga blocks, write the names of James Reese Europe, Duke Ellington, and Billie Holiday on three of the blocks. Write the names of other prominent Black jazz artists on the rest of the blocks (you may use the list provided in **Teacher Resource Sheet 1: Suggested names for Jenga Jazz** or you may have students suggest names of other prominent black jazz artists). Build a Jenga tower by placing the three blocks labeled James Reese Europe, Duke Ellington, and Billie Holiday on the bottom row. Build the rest of the tower using the other blocks, three to a row. The point is to illustrate to the class how, even though Washington and Baltimore are not known for jazz, the three major artists from this area provided a foundation for many others to follow. Let the students play Jenga without removing any of the bottom row of blocks and see how long they can keep the tower up. Rebuild the tower with the same three blocks in the bottom row, and remove one of the bottom row blocks as the first move. Again, see how long the tower can last before it collapses. Finally, build the tower again using the same three blocks in the bottom row, and try to remove two of the bottom row blocks as the first two moves. See if the students can keep removing blocks and see how long the tower lasts this time. The whole experiment here is based on "what-ifs", and hopefully the students will begin to take pride in the three names that are written on the bottom blocks – James Reese Europe, Duke Ellington, Billie Holiday. They should begin to be curious about these three names, and why we would consider them to be so important to jazz history. It is likely that without them, the rest of jazz history might not

have been quite the same. The next days of this lesson should start to bring that into focus.

As you move through the lessons in this unit of study, you should be constantly assessing students' progress. Assign small points each day to each student according to mastery of the material, participation in the class, and group activities. Remember that the point of assessment is not to reduce students to a letter grade, but to enable you and them to find out where they are in their studies and help them get to the next stage. A grade is a handy by-product of that assessment process, but should never be the main reason for assessment in the music classroom.

Lesson One

Watch the segment called "Hell Fighters" from Episode Two (The Gift) of the Ken Burns "Jazz" series. <http://thepiratebay.sx/torrent/3997447/>. You should be able to find the Ken Burns "Jazz" series in your local library if you do not already have a copy in your school library or school system resources. The segment runs from 22:31 to 30:41 on the DVD. Make sure to finish the segment right after the funeral of James Europe – the segment following it on the DVD is very difficult and deals with racism issues that are not part of this lesson. Discuss with students any achievements they noticed of James Europe and the "Hell Fighters" band (for example, first African American to face combat, picked to lead the march to the Rhine, more soldiers decorated for bravery than any other American regiment, etc). Ask them if they can begin to feel proud of this man and his band, for all their achievements.

Print and distribute copies of **Student Resource Sheet 1: "The Memphis Blues" One Line Score**. Remind students that not all of the members of James Europe's band were trained musicians. They were soldiers fighting for their country, but their dedication and Europe's skill as bandleader enabled them to have fun and create great music. Listen to the recording of James Europe's 369th US Infantry "Hell Fighters" Band playing "The Memphis Blues," <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pJPztEjzf6s> either from James Reese Europe's 369th US Infantry "Hell Fighters" Band – the Complete Recordings or Ken Burns Jazz: The Story of America's Music and help students follow along. Notice how the music seems to push forward, because the band is having so much fun playing the tune. Also, observe how instruments that do not play the melody (particularly the trombones) improvise freely underneath the tune. Draw attention to the extended section at the end of the music (rehearsal letter D). During that repeated passage there is a Stop-time where individual players get to interject their own improvised solo for two measures. There's a humorous moment in this section when a trumpet player chooses to play a military-style bugle call as his two-measure solo – you can highlight how incongruent that sounds, because the notes he plays are straight instead of swung. James Europe's band was a refreshing break from military precision – that's what made it so cool, and why the French people loved this new style. You may have to explain to students why the recording is not clear." It was recorded in 1919, so the

microphones and recording gear used were not as good as today's studio equipment, and the original acetates of the recording have also degraded over time.

If you are a proficient piano player, you can also play the piano version reprinted from the Lester S. Levy Sheet Music Collection at Johns Hopkins University and included as **Teacher Resource Sheet 2: "The Memphis Blues" by W.C. Handy**. There are one or two copyist errors in this sheet that you should be aware of – some notes on the first page are written as B sharp instead of B natural. Also, you should play the last page three times if you are playing along with the recording.

Please note that since "The Memphis Blues" was copyrighted before 1923 it is now in public domain, so if you need to make copies of music or wish to perform this music in public you do not need to seek permission from copyright holders. Sheet music versions of W.C. Handy's "The Memphis Blues" can be viewed and legally downloaded from the Lester S. Levy Sheet Music Collection at Johns Hopkins University at <http://levysheetmusic.mse.jhu.edu/catalog?utf8=%E2%9C%93&q=the+memphis+blues>

Lesson Two

Print and distribute parts for "The Memphis Blues," which has been included as several pages of **Student Resource Sheet 2: "The Memphis Blues" Performance Parts**. Different parts have been included for melody instruments, chord instruments and bass instruments. Assign parts to students according to ability and experience. If students already play in band or orchestra, let them use their instruments. Melody parts are included for Eb and Bb instruments, as well as guitar tab melody. If you have any proficient pianists in the class, you can have them learn the piano version from **Teacher Resource Sheet 2: "The Memphis Blues" by W.C. Handy** (having a piano will be an enormous help when it comes to creating a full performance of this music). The eventual aim of learning this music is to put together a class performance of "The Memphis Blues" by the end of the unit. Allow students the rest of the lesson to begin learning their parts for "The Memphis Blues". You may need to help them simplify some passages, change some octaves or find some notes they can simply "leave out." That's all allowable – the point here is to have fun making music just like Europe's band, not to produce a perfect band-festival-ready version. Ragtime does not have to be played fast – it sounds better at a steady tempo. The players in James Europe's band played "The Memphis Blues" at a very fast speed, but they were obviously having a lot of fun, and they may also have been pressed to get all the notes in within the three minutes usually allowed on one side of a phonograph record.

Lesson Three

Watch the "Hell Fighters" segment of the Ken Burns DVD again. <http://thepiratebay.sx/torrent/3997447/> See if students can hear the theme song of James Reese Europe's 369th US Infantry "Hell Fighters" Band (The Memphis Blues) in the background music anywhere in the segment. If you wish, you can also replay the CD

recording and have the students follow along with the One Line Score (Student Resource Sheet). It is good for the students to hear the original recording several times as they learn their own parts. You can use your own judgment to determine how many times to listen to the original and follow along, but you can switch it up by playing the piano version, to give them a different timbre and keep the music fresh. Let students use the rest of the lesson to continue working on their own parts for “The Memphis Blues.”

Lesson Four

Watch the segment called “Elegance” from Episode Four (The True Welcome) of the Ken Burns “Jazz” series. The segment runs from 36:44 to 45:44 on the DVD. Discuss with the students how Duke Ellington embodied elegance both in his demeanor and in his music. Talk about how different his music was from the rough and ready music of James Reese Europe’s band and ask students if they can tell the difference in style as they watch the segment. Europe’s music was ragged, whereas Ellington’s was smooth. Distribute **Student Resource Sheet 3 “East St. Louis Toodle-oo” Listening Guide**. Play the recording of The Washingtonians playing “East St. Louis Toodle-oo” from Ken Burns Jazz: The Story of America’s Music or Ken Burns Jazz: Duke Ellington. Have students follow along as they listen. Point out the different sound colors that Ellington gets from the band due to his skilled arrangement. This music is ragtime-based, just like “The Memphis Blues” but it is very sophisticated by comparison.

Let the students use the rest of the lesson to rehearse their parts for “The Memphis Blues.”

Lesson Five

In this lesson, students will begin to learn about Billie Holiday. Though she was an outstanding jazz artist, her lifestyle choices do not make her a positive role model for children. The video excerpt in this lesson includes mention of Billie’s destructive affairs with people of both genders. It would be wise to show this excerpt only with a mature class of students and to discuss many of the issues before watching. The video excerpt contains an important musical link between Ellington and Holiday, though **you may consider it wiser to omit the video if you do not feel that it is appropriate for the students in your class**. As an alternative, it would be good to read them the story of Billie Holiday’s life from Studs Terkel’s book “Giants of Jazz.” Studs Terkel relates the stories of the jazz greats in non-controversial ways that all children can understand and appreciate (the Ellington story in the same volume is also highly recommended). Studs Terkel’s book is available from amazon.com or you may find it in your local library.

Option 1: Video Excerpt. Watch the video excerpt about Billie Holiday from Episode 5 (Swing: Pure Pleasure) of the Ken Burns series.

<http://www.amazon.com/Jazz-Episode-Swing-Pure-Pleasure/dp/B000H9A202>

<http://www.amazon.com/Swing-Pure-Pleasure-1935-1937/dp/B002P3CV9I>

<http://www.hulu.com/#!watch/324484#i0,p3,d0>

http://films.com/id/19749/Swing_Pure_Pleasure-Ken_Burns_Jazz_Part_5.htm

<http://www.answers.com/topic/ken-burns-jazz-episode-5-swing-pure-pleasure-1935-1937>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c46iwiG5r00>

The excerpt is the end of the segment called “Men Working Together” and runs from 1:07:27 to 1:15:11. Talk with the students about how the pain of Billie’s upbringing affected her and how her singing style (singing before and behind the beat, decorating the melody, adding new notes and slides) is reflected in modern musical singing styles, particularly R&B. Listen to Billie Holiday sing “Solitude” (by Duke Ellington) from Ken Burns Jazz: The Story of America’s Music or The Complete Billie Holiday.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7GIbXDXachs>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jrMp3URM1JI>

Ask students to comment on how Billie manages to project the pain of loneliness and lost love through the way she interprets this simple lyric.

Option 2: Reading Excerpt. Read the Billie Holiday chapter from Studs Terkel’s “Giants of Jazz” book. Talk with students about the difficulties Billie faced as she grew up and what she means by the words she sings in “God Bless the Child.” These words are referenced the whole way through Terkel’s chapter. Listen to “God Bless the Child” from Ken Burns Jazz: The Story of America’s Music or The Complete Billie Holiday and discuss with the students how Billie’s voice seems to suggest optimism, despite the gloomy lyric.

Let students use the rest of the lesson time to rehearse their parts for “The Memphis Blues.” You can advise them that during an upcoming lesson you will be starting to put the band together. Obviously at this stage, you may need to schedule an extra lesson just for learning parts, dependent on the abilities and experience of the students, but do remember that fun in music-making, not perfection, is the goal.

Lesson Six

Review “The Memphis Blues” by listening again to the CD recording, or by playing the piano version, as the students follow the One Line Score (**Student Resource Sheet 1: “The Memphis Blues” One Line Score**) or their own performance parts. Spend this class rehearsing the music as a class band. Let students know that we will be performing this piece for an audience soon – maybe some other classes, maybe some parents, maybe some teachers.

Lesson Seven

Divide the class into three mixed-ability groups. Print and distribute Student Resource Sheets 4, 5, and 6 (Biographies of James Reese Europe, Duke Ellington, and Billie Holiday). Each group should be assigned one artist, but each member of the group should get their own copy of the appropriate Resource Sheet. You may choose ahead of time which group is going to be working on which jazz artist (you may have observed different interests in the different musicians during the previous lessons).

Let students know the goal of this reading assignment. As a class, you are going to pretend that the Reginald F. Lewis Museum of Maryland African American History and Culture is to create a “Hall of Fame” of Jazz Greats from Washington and Baltimore. Each group will present a two-minute speech about the musician they have been assigned, as James Reese Europe, Duke Ellington, and Billie Holiday are inducted into the museum. Each group will need someone to read the speech, several researchers and speechwriters, and several people to check the speech for accuracy and timing. Of course, group members can be assigned more than one task, but every group member must be involved. On the day of the “Hall of Fame” induction, the class will also celebrate jazz by performing “The Memphis Blues.” Choose an appropriate day by which you think the class will be able to achieve this and mark it on the calendar.

Have students begin work in their groups, reading the biographies they have been given and writing their speeches.

Lesson Eight and beyond

Continue through this lesson and subsequent lessons to rehearse the students playing “The Memphis Blues,” and allow them time to work on their “Hall of Fame” speeches. Keep assessing progress and assisting individual students and groups as they prepare for “The Big Day,” when they will perform their music and present their speeches to an audience. Keep encouraging students in order to ensure that they are having fun with this unit.

As you bring the performance together, let individual students improvise a solo for the Stop-time in the last section of “The Memphis Blues” (rehearsal letter D). Rather than trying to find “the right notes,” encourage creativity and innovation. As you find good examples of improvisation, make a plan of who’s going to play their improvisation for the performance on “The Big Day.” If the band needs to play that section more than six times to get all the solos in, make that happen – the audience won’t mind.

Remember that it is perfectly acceptable for you to play in the band with the students. If you play piano, you can play the full piano part (**Teacher Resource Sheet 2: “The Memphis Blues”**) to accompany them. After all, Duke Ellington directed his band from the piano. If you play a melody instrument, a guitar, or a bass, you may also play in the band to support the students. Other music staff might be willing to help out as well. Some non-music staff members who teach in your school may also be glad to come and join the band if they are proficient at playing an instrument. Students will enjoy having teachers in the band, and by doing this you will be allowing other teachers to experience the quality of what you are teaching in your classroom.

While students are working on their speeches, you may use the CDs to play jazz music for the class, highlighting the music of James Reese Europe, Duke Ellington, and Billie Holiday. If some students finish early and need to wait for the rest of the class, there are

extension activities listed below which you may use to keep them interested and motivated.

Closure

Invite parents, teachers, or other music classes, to the classroom for “The Big Day.” Send a flyer home, or within the school, advertising the class performance. On the day of the performance, begin the class by welcoming the audience and then perform “The Memphis Blues” for them. Then present the “Hall of Fame” induction by having each group present their speech on the jazz greats from Washington and Baltimore. Allow your audience to celebrate the achievements of your class. This has been a lot of hard work to get to this point, for the students and for you, and you should let that be recognized. Your students will feel a great deal of accomplishment, and they will hopefully continue a lifelong interest in one or all of the Jazz Greats from Washington and Baltimore.

Assessment:

As you move through the lessons in this unit of study, you should be constantly assessing students’ progress. Assign small points each day to each student according to mastery of the material, and participation in the class and group activities. Remember that the point of assessment is not to reduce students to a letter grade, but to enable you and them to find out where they are in their studies and help them get to the next stage. A grade is a handy by-product of that assessment process, but should never be the main reason for assessment in the music classroom.

Thoughtful Application:

This lesson is appropriate as a unit of study for any music class in a high school. It is written with General Music or Jazz History classes in mind, but it would also be a useful unit of study for Band classes, Orchestra classes, Jazz Band classes, or Music and Society classes. The arrangement of “The Memphis Blues” which is the major focus of the lesson is simple enough that any class would be able to undertake it so long as there are instruments available, though it will require practice and work on the part of the students for them to get the most enjoyment out of it. The lesson would also work without the performance aspect for music appreciation classes, or where there is no access to instruments. There is a downloadable version of “The Memphis Blues” with lyrics in the Lester S. Levy Sheet Music Collection at Johns Hopkins University at http://www.lyricsfreak.com/w/wc+handy/memphis+blues_20740343.html so a solo singer or a small chorus could also take part in the lesson.

Extensions:

- Use the internet or your local library to research James Reese Europe, Duke Ellington, and Billie Holiday. Add information from your web or library research into your group’s speech.

- Search for music by James Reese Europe at the Lester S. Levy Sheet Music Collection at Johns Hopkins University (<http://levysheetmusic.mse.jhu.edu/>). You will find some of the music he composed for Vernon and Irene Castle's dance duo. Learn to play one of these songs on the piano.
- Read the chapters on Duke Ellington and Billie Holiday in Studs Terkel's "Giants of Jazz" book.
- Create a listening guide for a Duke Ellington song. Listen to a CD of Ellington, or download some music from iTunes, and pick a song that has many different sound colors. Some tunes which contain lots of different sound colors are "Mood Indigo," "The Mooche," "Take The 'A' Train," "Rockin' in Rhythm," or "Cotton Tail."
- Research and write a speech about a different jazz artist from Washington or Baltimore. Suggestions: Chick Webb, Cab Calloway, Blanche Calloway, Shirley Horn, Ethel Ennis, Eubie Blake, Ruby Glover.
- Help to decorate the classroom for "The Big Day." You might like to create a bulletin board of pictures of Washington/Baltimore Jazz Greats from the internet, or create some red, white and blue decorations (like the decorations that might have greeted the 369th Infantry when they returned to New York).
- Visit the Reginald F. Lewis Museum to view the exhibits on African American musicians from Washington and Maryland.

Teacher Resource Sheet 1

Notable African American Jazz Artists (Ideas for Jenga Blocks)

James Reese Europe	Duke Ellington	Billie Holiday
Louis Armstrong	Cab Calloway	Fats Waller
Wynton Marsalis	Charlie Christian	Cassandra Wilson
Ella Fitzgerald	Bessie Smith	Count Basie
John Coltrane	Miles Davis	Benny Carter
Dizzy Gillespie	Lionel Hampton	Charles Mingus
Thelonious Monk	Ethel Waters	Earl Hines
Fletcher Henderson	Ma Rainey	Sarah Vaughan
Branford Marsalis	Jelly Roll Morton	Clifford Brown
Charlie Parker	Dinah Washington	Grover Washington Jr.

Wayne Shorter	Betty Carter	Nina Simone
Eubie Blake	Carmen McRae	Sonny Rollins
Teddy Wilson	Art Blakey	Shirley Horn
Ben Webster	Ornette Coleman	Max Roach
Lester Young	Chick Webb	Bud Powell
King Oliver	Herbie Hancock	Sonny Stitt
Nat King Cole	Cannonball Adderley	Hank Jones
Jimmie Lunceford	Fats Domino	Coleman Hawkins

Teacher Resource Sheet 2

3

The Memphis Blues

or
(Mister Crump)

By W. C. HANDY

Tempo di Blues

Copyright transferred MCMXII to Theron C. Bennett Co.
Copyright MCMXII by W. C. Handy
Memphis, Tenn.

<http://levysheetmusic.mse.jhu.edu/catalog?utf8=%E2%9C%93&q=the+memphis+blues>

“Courtesy of the Lester S. Levy Collection of sheet Music, The Sheridan Libraries, The Johns Hopkins University.”

Teacher Resource Sheet 2 (continued)

4

The Memphis Blues

<http://levysheetmusic.mse.jhu.edu/catalog?utf8=%E2%9C%93&q=the+memphis+blues>

“Courtesy of the Lester S. Levy Collection of sheet Music, The Sheridan Libraries, The Johns Hopkins University.”

Teacher Resource Sheet 2 (continued)

The Memphis B. B.

<http://levysheetmusic.mse.jhu.edu/catalog?utf8=%E2%9C%93&q=the+memphis+blues>

“Courtesy of the Lester S. Levy Collection of sheet Music, The Sheridan Libraries, The Johns Hopkins University.”

Student Resource Sheet 1

ONE LINE SCORE

THE MEMPHIS BLUES, AS PERFORMED BY JAMES REESE EUROPE'S 369TH US INFANTRY "HELL FIGHTERS" BAND

W.C. HANDY
TRANSCRIBED BY RICHARD MCCREADY

RAQTIME TEMPO (♩=80-100)

The musical score is written on seven staves in 2/4 time. It begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (Bb), and a tempo marking of 'RAQTIME TEMPO (♩=80-100)'. The first staff contains the first line of music, ending with a repeat sign and a first ending bracket labeled 'A'. The second staff continues the melody. The third staff features a first ending bracket labeled '1' and a second ending bracket labeled '2'. The fourth staff begins with a second ending bracket labeled 'B'. The fifth staff continues the melody. The sixth staff features a first ending bracket labeled '1'. The seventh staff begins with a second ending bracket labeled '2' and a third ending bracket labeled 'C'. The score concludes with a double bar line and a key signature change to two flats (Bb and Eb).

Student Resource Sheet 1 (continued)

REPEAT 6X FOR SOLOS

(TWO MEASURE BREAK FOR SOLOS)

TO CODA LAST TIME

CODA

W.C. Handy
Transcribed by Richard McCready

Student Resource Sheet 2a

C MELODY INSTRUMENTS

THE MEMPHIS BLUES, AS PERFORMED BY JAMES REESE EUROPE'S 369TH US INFANTRY "HELL FIGHTERS" BAND

W.C. HANDY
TRANSCRIBED BY RICHARD MCCREADY

RAQTIME TEMPO (♩=80-100)

The musical score is written for a C melody instrument in 2/4 time. It consists of seven staves of music. The key signature has one flat (Bb). The tempo is marked 'RAQTIME TEMPO' with a quarter note equal to 80-100 beats per minute. The score includes several measures of eighth and sixteenth notes, as well as rests. There are three boxed labels: 'A' at the end of the first staff, 'B' at the beginning of the fourth staff, and 'C' at the beginning of the seventh staff. First and second endings are indicated by bracketed lines above the staves.

Student Resource Sheet 2a (continued)

REPEAT 6X FOR SOLOS

(TWO MEASURE BREAK FOR SOLOS)

TO CODA LAST TIME

CODA

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of two flats (Bb and Eb). It consists of three staves. The first staff begins with a repeat sign and a box containing the letter 'D', followed by the instruction 'REPEAT 6X FOR SOLOS'. The melody consists of eighth and sixteenth notes. The second staff starts with a two-measure rest, indicated by the instruction '(TWO MEASURE BREAK FOR SOLOS)', followed by a double bar line and a new musical phrase. Above the staff, there is a circled 'X' symbol and the instruction 'TO CODA LAST TIME'. The third staff begins with a circled 'X' symbol and the instruction 'CODA', followed by a musical phrase that ends with a double bar line. The melody in the third staff includes a triplet of eighth notes.

W.C. Handy
Transcribed by Richard McCready

Student Resource Sheet 2b

3 FLAT MELODY INSTRUMENTS

THE MEMPHIS BLUES, AS PERFORMED BY JAMES REESE EUROPE'S 369TH US INFANTRY "HELL FIGHTERS" BAND

W.C. HANDY
TRANSCRIBED BY RICHARD MCCREARY

RAQTIME TEMPO (♩=80-100)

The musical score is written for three flat melody instruments in 2/4 time. It consists of seven staves of music. The first staff begins with a tempo marking 'RAQTIME TEMPO (♩=80-100)' and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The music is divided into sections labeled A, B, and C. Section A is the first line of music, ending with a double bar line. Section B is the second line of music, ending with a double bar line. Section C is the third line of music, ending with a double bar line. The score includes various musical notations such as eighth notes, quarter notes, and rests, as well as repeat signs and first/second endings.

Student Resource Sheet 2b (continued)

The musical score is written on three staves in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). The first staff begins with a box containing the letter 'D' and the instruction 'REPEAT 6X FOR SOLOS'. The melody consists of eighth and sixteenth notes. The second staff starts with a two-measure rest, indicated by the text '(TWO MEASURE BREAK FOR SOLOS)' above the first measure. This is followed by a double bar line and a new musical phrase. Above the staff, the text 'TO CODA LAST TIME' is written with a double bar line and a repeat sign. The third staff begins with a double bar line and a repeat sign, followed by the word 'CODA' above the staff. The melody continues with eighth and sixteenth notes, ending with a final double bar line.

W.C. Handy
Transcribed by Richard McCready

Student Resource Sheet 2c

E FLAT MELODY INSTRUMENTS

THE MEMPHIS BLUES, AS PERFORMED BY JAMES REESE EUROPE'S 369TH US INFANTRY "HELL FIGHTERS" BAND

W.C. HANDY
TRANSCRIBED BY RICHARD MCCREADY

RAQTIME TEMPO (♩=80-100)

A

1. 2.

B

1. 2.

C

Student Resource Sheet 2c (continued)

The musical score is written in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of three staves of music.

The first staff begins with a square box containing the letter 'D'. Above the staff, the text "REPEAT 6X FOR SOLOS" is written. The melody consists of eighth and quarter notes.

The second staff begins with a double bar line and the text "(TWO MEASURE BREAK FOR SOLOS)" above it. This is followed by a double bar line and a C-clef (soprano clef) with the text "TO CODA LAST TIME" above it. The melody continues with eighth and quarter notes.

The third staff begins with a C-clef and the text "CODA" above it. The melody continues with eighth and quarter notes, ending with a double bar line.

W.C. Handy
Transcribed by Richard McCready

Student Resource Sheet 2d

GUITAR MELODY TAB

THE MEMPHIS BLUES, AS PERFORMED BY JAMES REESE EUROPE'S 369TH US INFANTRY "HELL FIGHTERS" BAND

W.C. HANDY
TRANSCRIBED BY RICHARD MCCREADY

RAQTIME TEMPO (♩=80-100)

A

The first system of guitar melody tab for 'The Memphis Blues'. It features a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (Bb), and a 2/4 time signature. The tempo is marked 'RAQTIME TEMPO (♩=80-100)'. The system includes a melodic line with a repeat sign and a first ending bracket labeled 'A'. Below the staff is a guitar tab with fret numbers: 3 0 1, 2 1 3 3, 1 2 1 2 3 0 3, 3, 2 3 0, and 1 3 1 2 3 0.

The second system of guitar melody tab. It continues the melodic line with a repeat sign. The guitar tab below the staff includes fret numbers: 1 3 4 3 1 2, 3 3 3 3 3 3 3 3, 3 3 3 3 2 3 0, 1 0 3 3 2 3 0, 1 0 3 3 0 3, and 3.

The third system of guitar melody tab. It includes a first ending bracket labeled '1' and a second ending bracket labeled '2'. The melodic line ends with a repeat sign. The guitar tab below the staff includes fret numbers: 3 0 1, 2 1 3 3, 1 2 1 2 3 0 3, 3, 2 3 0, and 3.

Student Resource Sheet 2d (continued)

8

1 0 3 3 0 1 0 3 3 0 3 2 1 2 2 1 2 3 2 1 2 2 3 2 1 0 3 3 0

1 0 3 3 0 2 2 2 2 2 2 2 0 3 2 0 2 4 0 2 4 0 2 4 0 2 4 0 2 4

0 2 0 2 0 2 0 0 2 0 0 2 0 1 0 3 3 0 1 0 3 3 0 3 3

9

3 3 0 1 2 3 3 1 2 1 2 3 0 3 3 3

Student Resource Sheet 2d (continued)

D REPEAT 6X FOR SOLOS

(TWO MEASURE BREAK FOR SOLOS) **To CODA LAST TIME**

CODA

W.C. Handy
Transcribed by Richard McCready

Student Resource Sheet 2e

CHORD INSTRUMENTS

THE MEMPHIS BLUES, AS PERFORMED BY JAMES REESE EUROPE'S 369TH US INFANTRY "HELL FIGHTERS" BAND

W.C. HANDY
TRANSCRIBED BY RICHARD MCCREARY

RAQTIME TEMPO (♩=80-100)

Chord progression: C⁷ F A⁷ F⁷ B^b B^bm

Chord progression: F F^o B^b⁷ F C⁷ F

Chord progression: F C⁷ F C⁷

Chord progression: A⁷ D⁷ G⁷ C⁷

Chord progression: F F

Chord progression: C⁷ F

Key signature change: B^b

Student Resource Sheet 2e (continued)

REPEAT 6X FOR SOLOS

D $B\flat$ $B\flat 7$ $E\flat$

(TWO MEASURE BREAK FOR SOLOS)

$F 7$ $B\flat$ TO CODA LAST TIME

$F 7$ CODA $B\flat$ F $B\flat$

W.C. Handy
Transcribed by Richard McCready

Student Resource Sheet 2f

BASS INSTRUMENTS

THE MEMPHIS BLUES, AS PERFORMED BY JAMES REESE EUROPE'S 369TH US INFANTRY "HELL FIGHTERS" BAND

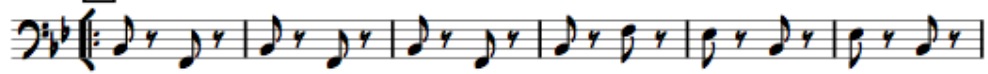
W.C. HANDY
TRANSCRIBED BY RICHARD MCCREARY

RAQTIME TEMPO (♩=80-100)

The musical score is written for bass instruments in 2/4 time. It consists of six staves of music. The first staff begins with a key signature of one flat (Bb) and a tempo marking of 80-100 beats per minute. The music is in a blues style, featuring eighth and sixteenth notes. The score includes several repeat signs and first/second endings. A box labeled 'A' is placed above the first staff, and a box labeled 'B' is placed above the third staff. A box labeled 'C' is placed above the sixth staff. The score ends with a double bar line.

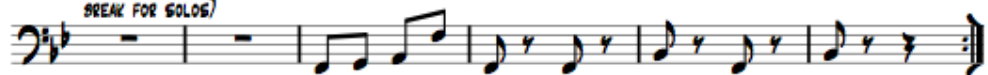
Student Resource Sheet 2f (continued)

D REPEAT 6X FOR SOLOS

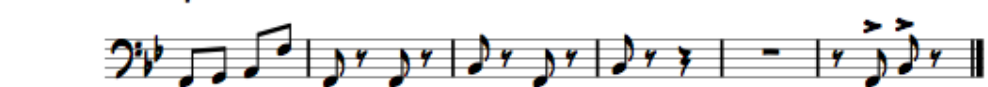


TO CODA LAST TIME

(TWO MEASURE BREAK FOR SOLOS)



CODA



W.C. Handy
Transcribed by Richard McCready

Student Resource Sheet 3

“East St. Louis Toodle-oo” by The Washingtonians Listening Guide

Duke Ellington’s recorded “East St. Louis Toodle-oo” with his band The Washingtonians in 1927. James “Bubber” Miley, a trumpet player in the band, co-wrote the tune with Ellington. “East St. Louis Toodle-oo” features the jungle sound that Ellington’s early music was known for. It features Bubber Miley playing the trumpet into a rubber plunger mute, which gives a distinctive wah-wah sound. This sound is now synonymous with jazz, but Bubber Miley was the first to use it. “East St. Louis Toodle-oo” was the theme song of the Washingtonians and The Duke Ellington Orchestra through fourteen years of concerts and radio broadcasts, until it was replaced by Billy Strayhorn’s masterpiece “Take The ‘A’ Train”.

Follow along with the description of the music as you listen to it, and see if you can hear all the tone colors and new sounds that the members of Ellington’s band create as they play “East St. Louis Toodle-oo.”

- 0:00 – Opening – Dark mysterious chords in a minor key, played by the saxes. Tuba and banjo provide the rhythm of each measure (tuba on beats 1 and 3, banjo on beats 2 and 4).
- 0:11 – Trumpet (Bubber Miley) plays main tune, using a plunger mute.
- 0:35 – Trumpet continues melody by moves into a major key. Saxes are replaced by a trombone counter-melody.
- 0:46 – Trumpet melody becomes two-note fragments accompanied by the saxes, with splash cymbal interjections.
- 0:49 – Saxes return to the dark mysterious chords, and melody moves back into the minor key.
- 1:01 – Trombone takes a solo in the major key.
- 1:10 – An example of a “Stop-time” where the rhythm instruments (banjo and tuba) stop playing and let the soloist play on his own for two measures.
- 1:28 – Clarinet takes a solo in the minor key, with splash cymbal interrupting at 1:43.
- 1:49 – Trumpets interrupt the clarinet solo to begin the major key section again, now sounding like military-style bugle calls.
- 2:02 – Stop-time, leaving just the trumpets.
- 2:20 – Clarinets and saxes answer the trumpets with their own version of the major key section, sounding like a European folk-dance.
- 2:29 – Stop-time for clarinets and saxes, with splash cymbal.
- 2:32 – Trumpets return to join the clarinets and saxes, playing the bugle-call melody again.
- 2:47 – Bubber Miley plays the opening tune with plunger mute again, and the saxes return to the dark mysterious chords that opened the music.
- 2:58 – Trumpet slows the music down into a short tag, leaving the last sound for the cymbal.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VJIfyyxKSvY>

Student Resource Sheet 4

Use this biography to prepare a speech to induct James Reese Europe into the Reginald F. Lewis Museum Jazz Greats “Hall of Fame.” Read it several times to make sure you understand everything and ask your teacher, or other group members, if there is something that needs to be explained differently. Use pencil to underline any important parts of his career that you think should be mentioned in your speech, or use a highlighter marker. Use the sides of the paper to add extra notes. When you are ready, collaborate with your other group members to create your speech.

James Reese Europe (1881-1919)

James Reese Europe was born in 1881 in Alabama, but his parents moved to Washington, D.C. when he was still a child. The family moved into a house on the same street as the great American bandleader John Philip Sousa, the man who wrote “The Stars and Stripes Forever.”



Young James received many music lessons from the members of Sousa’s band and grew to love the sounds of the military band. When he was in his 20s, James Europe moved to New York, where he conducted musical shows in the theatres there. In booking musicians to play in these shows, Europe became aware of the different treatment of black musicians from white musicians in the city – the New York branch of the American Federation of Musicians forbade blacks to be members. Blacks found it harder to get bookings, and they had no union protection to enable them to receive insurance or unemployment payment. In order to redress the balance, James Europe began “The Clef Club,” the first musicians’ union for black musicians. By joining The Clef Club, black

musicians could look forward to more regular employment and much-needed protection for their livelihood.

James Europe loved the city, and he loved the musicians he met there. He learned about a new style of music that was becoming fashionable amongst black musicians – ragtime. In ragtime, musicians would play notes in a ragged way, not ‘straight’ according to what was printed on the page, but looser and with more improvisation. It was an early form of jazz and was well accepted by whites who preferred it to the dark, earthy sounds of the blues. African American musicians found respect amongst whites by playing ragtime, and James Reese Europe knew that ragtime was a way that he could get audiences of all colors to appreciate black music. Europe organized and conducted the first ever concerts of black music in Carnegie Hall, and he was the first to make a record featuring an orchestra made up completely of black musicians. Because of what he did to represent African American musicians, ragtime pianist Eubie Blake later said “He was our benefactor and inspiration. Even more, he was the Martin Luther King of music.”

James Europe became the musical director for Vernon and Irene Castle, a duo who were known throughout Europe and the USA for their incredible skills on the dance floor. They showcased ballroom dancing styles, and Europe wrote many showpieces for them. One of the Castle Duo's best-known dances was a foxtrot choreographed to W.C. Handy's tune "The Memphis Blues." James Reese Europe arranged the tune for the Castle Duo's band, and it became a big ragtime hit. Europe also added an unusual instrument to their band – the saxophone (which would soon become the quintessential sound of all great jazz bands).

When the First World War broke out in 1914, Europe enlisted as a lieutenant in the army. His regiment, the 15th New York Infantry, was the first regiment of black soldiers granted a commission by the Governor of New York. When they traveled to France to join the war effort in 1918, they became the 369th US Infantry Regiment. James Reese Europe was the natural choice for bandleader. Europe's band played military music unlike any other regimental band, because Europe added ragtime to the music. The band took old marches and added ragged rhythms and swing. Their music was infectious and fun. Their theme song was the same tune that Europe had arranged for the Castles – "The Memphis Blues." The French people adored this new sound they heard from the band of the 369th US Infantry Regiment. James Europe's band members were the first Americans to bring the new jazz style to the countries of the European continent.

In combat the members of the 369th US Infantry were unparalleled. On April 20th, 1918, James Europe accompanied a French patrol deep into no-man's-land under heavy fire, and thus became the first African American to face combat in the war. The regiment survived 191 days of heavy combat, and they were chosen by the French Military High Command to lead the Allied forces to the Rhine. One hundred seventy-one members of the 369th were decorated for bravery, the most of any American regiment. The French nicknamed them the "Hell Fighters."

When the 369th US Infantry "Hell Fighters" Regiment returned from war, they were given a heroes' welcome by the City of New York. James Europe led the band as they paraded through the streets of the city. The "Hell Fighters" band went on a successful tour of US cities and made 24 recordings, bringing their ragtime sound back to America. It would all end too soon, however, in August 1919. An argument between Europe and one of the band's drummers turned deadly, and Europe was knifed in the neck. He died less than 24 hours later at the age of 39. It is thought that he would have probably gone on to popularize Black music in ways we can only dream of, and his death at such a young age is incalculable.

James Reese Europe is buried in Arlington Cemetery which is near his hometown of Washington, DC. A simple grave marks the last resting place of the man who helped to bring equal rights for Black musicians and who took American jazz music to the World. He was a true American hero.

<http://www.blackpast.org/?q=aah/europe-james-reese-1881-1919>

Student Resource Sheet 5

Use this biography to prepare a speech to induct Duke Ellington into the Reginald F. Lewis Museum Jazz Greats “Hall of Fame.” Read it several times to make sure you understand everything and ask your teacher, or other group members, if there is something that needs to be explained differently. Use pencil to underline any important parts of his career that you think should be mentioned in your speech, or use a highlighter marker. Use the sides of the paper to add extra notes. When you are ready, collaborate with your other group members to create your speech.

Edward Kennedy “Duke” Ellington (1899-1974)

Edward Kennedy Ellington grew up in Washington, DC. His parents valued hard work and understood the importance of the Arts in his upbringing. They taught him to act with dignity at all times, to be proud of his accomplishments yet not arrogant, and to honor all those he should come in contact with.

Ellington played the piano from an early age, but resisted the conformity of learning to play notes exactly as they were printed on the page. He liked to copy the styles of great black ragtime pianists such as James P. Johnson, ‘Jelly Roll’ Morton, and Scott Joplin. He loved to compose at the piano, using chords to create new colors and sounds. Ellington’s abilities to entertain at the piano earned him many friends growing up, and they nicknamed him “The Duke” because of his fashionable clothes.



Duke Ellington had a band called “The Washingtonians” which played ragtime tunes and many of Ellington’s own compositions. They went to New York to try to become successful in the music business, but their success was limited at first. They returned to Washington, but they never gave up trying to get better. The Washingtonians played at clubs throughout Washington, D.C. and Virginia. Duke Ellington also began to publish his own songs as sheet music. The band got a lucky break when piano-player Fats Waller asked for members of the band to become part of his own band in New York. As a result, some of The Washingtonians returned to the big city. Eventually Fats Waller asked for Duke to come to New York and take over the band himself. The band became “The Duke Ellington Orchestra” and took up residence at some of the finest New York clubs. Their most important engagement was at The Cotton Club in Harlem through the 1930s and early 1940s.

The Cotton Club was owned by a man who ran the club on very strict racial lines - the band members were Black, the dancers were light-skinned Blacks, and yet the customers who came to the club were all White. Ellington was well aware of the racial injustices at

The Cotton Club, but he refused to let these issues destroy his dream of creating great music. Ellington was too fine of a man – he would conquer racism by rising above it, not descending to its level.

Duke Ellington liked to think of his music as “American Music” rather than jazz and even though he brought together some of the finest songwriters and jazz musicians the World has ever seen to be his band, the music was always elegant and sophisticated. His style of music was a far cry from the brash ragtime and Dixieland sounds where jazz had begun. His skill at arranging for the different tone colors of the band was unparalleled – he coaxed the greatest variety of sounds from his band members, and The Duke Ellington Orchestra became the greatest jazz band the World has ever heard.

Through his residency at the Cotton Club and the proceeds from the sale of sheet music, Duke Ellington became very wealthy. He was able to pay for his parents to retire. He was even able to buy a train for the band, so they wouldn’t have to sit in segregated seats when they went on tour. Though his style of music went out of fashion as the swing era music of younger band leaders such as Benny Goodman, Artie Shaw, and the Dorsey brothers took over in popularity, Duke remained a living legend and an ambassador for true “American” music up until his death in 1974.

Ellington is buried in New York, but his legacy remains in Washington, as the city’s “School of the Arts” bears his name. Today, the Duke Ellington School of the Arts in Washington, DC, educates tomorrow’s artists by honoring Duke’s ideals of hard work, self-pride, elegance, and dedication to one’s craft.

<http://www.blackpast.org/?q=aah/ellington-edward-duke-1899-1974>

Student Resource Sheet 6

Use this biography to prepare a speech to induct Billie Holiday into the Reginald F. Lewis Museum Jazz Greats “Hall of Fame.” Read it several times to make sure you understand everything and ask your teacher, or other group members, if there is something that needs to be explained differently. Use pencil to underline any important parts of her career that you think should be mentioned in your speech, or use a highlighter marker. Use the sides of the paper to add extra notes. When you are ready, collaborate with your other group members to create your speech.

Billie Holiday (1915-1959)



Billie Holiday was born into poverty in Baltimore City. Her real name was Eleanora Fagan, though some sources give her name as Elinora Harris. Her childhood was very difficult. She idolized Billie Dove, an actress, and took her first name. Her last name came from Clarence Holiday, a man who once had a romantic affair with Billie’s mother, and who was probably Billie’s father (though the birth certificate lists a different man). Clarence was a jazz guitarist in Fletcher Henderson’s band and even though he was notably absent in Billie’s upbringing, he did take her to see jazz shows and probably inspired her to take music as her career.

Billie Holiday had to work hard to earn money for the family from an early age. She scrubbed the stoops and doorsteps of people’s houses near to her childhood home, in Fells Point, Baltimore. By buying her own supplies, she was able to charge more than other workers, and she also offered to help clean inside people’s home for more money. By promoting herself door-to-door, she was able to earn the \$4 rent each week for her family to stay living in their tiny house on Durham Street. Billie’s mother was rarely home, and the young girl also had to take care of her elderly great-grandmother. One of the most traumatic moments of Billie’s early life came when she fell asleep in her great-grandmother’s arms and woke to find that the old woman had died. As a result, Billie was stuck in her grasp for two hours until the neighbors came and rescued her.

Billie first started to hear records in some of the more upscale places where she would clean. She sang along to the songs of Bessie Smith, a wonderful African American blues singer, and Louis Armstrong, the great trumpeter. This led to her realizing that singing was her way to pour out all the pain of her harsh upbringing. When she sang it was the only time she felt happy.

When Billie was 12, she and her mother moved to New York. Billie got a lucky break when she auditioned for a dancing job at “The Log Cabin,” a nightclub in downtown Manhattan. Jerry Preston, the owner, told her he had no jobs for dancers but asked her if she could sing. When she opened her mouth and began to sing, Mr. Preston was astounded at the easiness of her voice and the way her singing invoked such sadness. He immediately engaged her to sing at the club. Gradually Billie’s fame spread through New York. She became known as a singer who really felt every word she sang. When she sang of love and loss, everybody could hear the pain in her voice. Although Billie had affairs with many men, unfortunately she never found true love in her life. Her singing reflected the longing, loneliness, and pain better than any other singer the World has ever known.

As Billie become famous, some of the greatest jazz bands in the country engaged her to sing with them. She recorded many songs and as a result, today we are lucky to have many of her recordings that we can listen to. She was a favorite singer of many jazz greats including Benny Goodman and Lester Young, who gave her the nickname “Lady Day.”

Billie’s childhood pains never went away, though. She sought release in narcotics and even went to jail for drug possession. At the young age of 44, she died from her addiction to heroin. Billie Holiday is buried in New York, but she is honored in Baltimore City by a statue on Pennsylvania Avenue. The statue is near the site of the demolished Royal Theater, once the vibrant home of jazz in Baltimore, and the place where Billie sang many times whenever she would come home.

<http://www.blackpast.org/?q=aah/holliday-billie-1915-1959>